

18. Under the laws which have been passed since 1873, tribal and family lands have frequently been awarded to one or two individuals, who have been clothed with titles for the convenience of Pakeha purchasers and lessees.

19. This practice of empowering a single person to do whatever he pleases with tribal lands has been a complete innovation to us, because lands never belonged to one person but to the whole tribe or family.

20. According to the powers vested in these persons by Parliament, we have been debarred from dealing with our own lands. We are like sheep without a shepherd, being driven hither and thither.

21. That the laws of Parliament have made us appear an ignorant and inferior people; and the Native Land Court has ignored the existence of the rights of the chiefs; and the Natives generally have been dispersed, and those who had homes have been deprived of them.

22. Your petitioners desire that what land is now left to the Natives be managed in such a manner as would return to them and their children the largest profits, and that that management be left to the Natives themselves, as they are all anxious to cultivate and improve them, just as the white people do.

23. Your petitioners believe that the Natives are perfectly capable of taking care of themselves and their properties, if they were allowed to do so.

24. It would be too difficult to enumerate all our grievances, and the wrongs that we and our people have suffered in consequence of the laws hereinbefore mentioned. We have year after year raised our voices against them, but nothing has come of our protestations.

25. We cannot understand gentlemen of learning, such as those who are sent to Parliament to make just laws, allowing laws which prejudicially affect us and our lands to be passed year after year; for it is said that their duty is to do that which is right, and not that which is wrong and unjust.

26. We have thought that it would only be right that Parliament should be informed of our grievances, and the manner in which our interests have been neglected; but we hear that little consideration is shown to the Maoris, and our prayers only sound as from afar, and are treated as the murmuring of the wind.

Wherefore we pray that your honourable House may be pleased to grant us the things following, that is to say:—

- (1.) That the right to manage our own property be given back to us; so that peace and happiness may reign throughout these islands.
- (2.) That the power to govern the Natives be delegated to the Federated Maori Assembly of New Zealand.
- (3.) That the said Assembly consist of an Upper and a Lower House. The Upper to consist of the chiefs by birth,
- (4.) And the Lower House shall consist of Natives who shall be elected by the different tribes to represent them in the Assembly.
- (5.) The said Federated Assembly to have power to appoint District Committees comprised of Maoris, who shall investigate titles to Native lands, and subdivide the same, according to the rules of equity and good conscience.
- (6.) We have annexed hereto a Bill which was passed at the meeting of the Federated Maori Assembly which was held at Waipatu on the 22nd day of May, 1893, wherein all that we require are fully set forth.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

MEIHA KEEPA RANGIHIWINUI (Major Kemp),
and 55 Others.

Countersigned by HENARE TOMOANA, as Speaker of the Maori meeting held at Waipatu, in May, 1893.

THE FEDERATED MAORI ASSEMBLY EMPOWERING BILL.

AN ACT to empower the Maoris to enact Laws in respect of their own Properties.

WHEREAS under the Treaty of Waitangi, one thousand eight hundred and forty, and also under a certain Imperial Act of date the thirtieth day of May, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-two, intituled "The Constitution Act of New Zealand," it was provided that the laws, customs, and usages of the inhabitants of New Zealand, so far as the same are not repugnant to the general principles of humanity, should be maintained for the government of themselves in all their relations to and dealings with each other, and that particular districts should be set apart within which such laws, customs, or usages, should be observed: that it shall be lawful for Her Majesty, by any letters patent to be issued under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, from time to time to make provisions for the purposes aforesaid, any repugnancy of any such native laws, customs, or usages to the law of England, or to any law, statute, or usage in force in New Zealand or in any part thereof in anywise notwithstanding: And whereas, at a meeting of the Federated Maori Assembly held at Waipatu, on the eleventh day of April, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three, it was resolved that the New Zealand Parliament be petitioned to grant to the Maoris a Legislature of their own for the purpose of governing their affairs: And whereas the Maoris are desirous of standing upon equal footing with the white people as far as perfect liberty of dealing with their lands is concerned: And whereas a petition signed by twenty-one thousand nine hundred of the chief people of New Zealand has been presented to the Parliament of New Zealand, praying for an independent Legislature for the Maori people, to be called the Federated Maori Assembly: And whereas all the laws affecting the Maoris and their lands, especially the Native Land Court Acts, have proved unsatisfactory and unjust; and it is expedient, in order to relieve the Maoris of their grievances, to abolish the said laws, and to make other provisions in lieu thereof.